

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

6-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) ~~The ferrule according to claim 8;~~ A ferrule comprising:  
at least two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning  
with respect to a mating ferrule are inserted; and  
a plurality of fiber fixed holes for inserting an optical fiber, said fiber fixed  
holes being formed at predetermined locations with respect to said two  
alignment pin holes;

wherein each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide portion for guiding the optical fiber, a fiber hole portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the tip end of the optical fiber, and a fiber insertion portion adjacent said fiber guide portion that is formed as a common fiber insertion portion to receive a plurality of sheathed portions of the optical fiber; and

wherein said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion are joined  
with a connecting position having a tapered shape, said fiber insertion  
portion is provided with a movement regulating means consists  
comprising of a convex portion for regulating the movement of a  
sheathed portion of the optical fiber in the direction of arrangement of  
the sheathed portion, and the width of said fiber insertion portion in said movement regulating means in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of the sheathed portion is smaller than the diameter of said sheathed portion.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) ~~The ferrule according to claim 10;~~ A ferrule comprising:

at least two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning with respect to a mating ferrule are inserted; and a plurality of fiber fixed holes for inserting an optical fiber, said fiber fixed holes being formed at predetermined locations with respect to said two alignment pin holes;

wherein each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide portion for guiding the optical fiber, a fiber hole portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the tip end of the optical fiber, a fiber insertion portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the sheathed portion of the optical fiber, and an adhesive agent pool for fixing the optical fiber formed at the opening portion of said fiber insertion portion; and

wherein said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion are joined with a connecting position having a tapered shape; and the width of the opening portion of said adhesive agent pool in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion is larger than the width of said opening portion in the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion.

12. (Original) The ferrule according to claim 11, wherein said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion are formed into a continuous taper shape.

13. (New) A ferrule comprising:  
at least two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning with respect to a mating ferrule are inserted; and  
a plurality of fiber fixed holes for inserting an optical fiber, said fiber fixed holes being formed at predetermined locations with respect to said two alignment pin holes;  
wherein each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide portion for guiding the optical fiber, a fiber hole portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the tip end of the optical fiber, a fiber insertion portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the sheathed

portion of the optical fiber, and an adhesive agent pool for fixing the optical fiber formed at the opening portion of said fiber insertion portion, said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion being joined with a connecting position having a tapered shape, said fiber insertion portion being provided with a movement regulation means comprising a convex portion for regulating the movement of a sheathed portion of the optical fiber in the direction of arrangement of the sheathed portion;

wherein the width of the opening portion of said adhesive agent pool in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion is larger than the width of said opening portion in the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion.